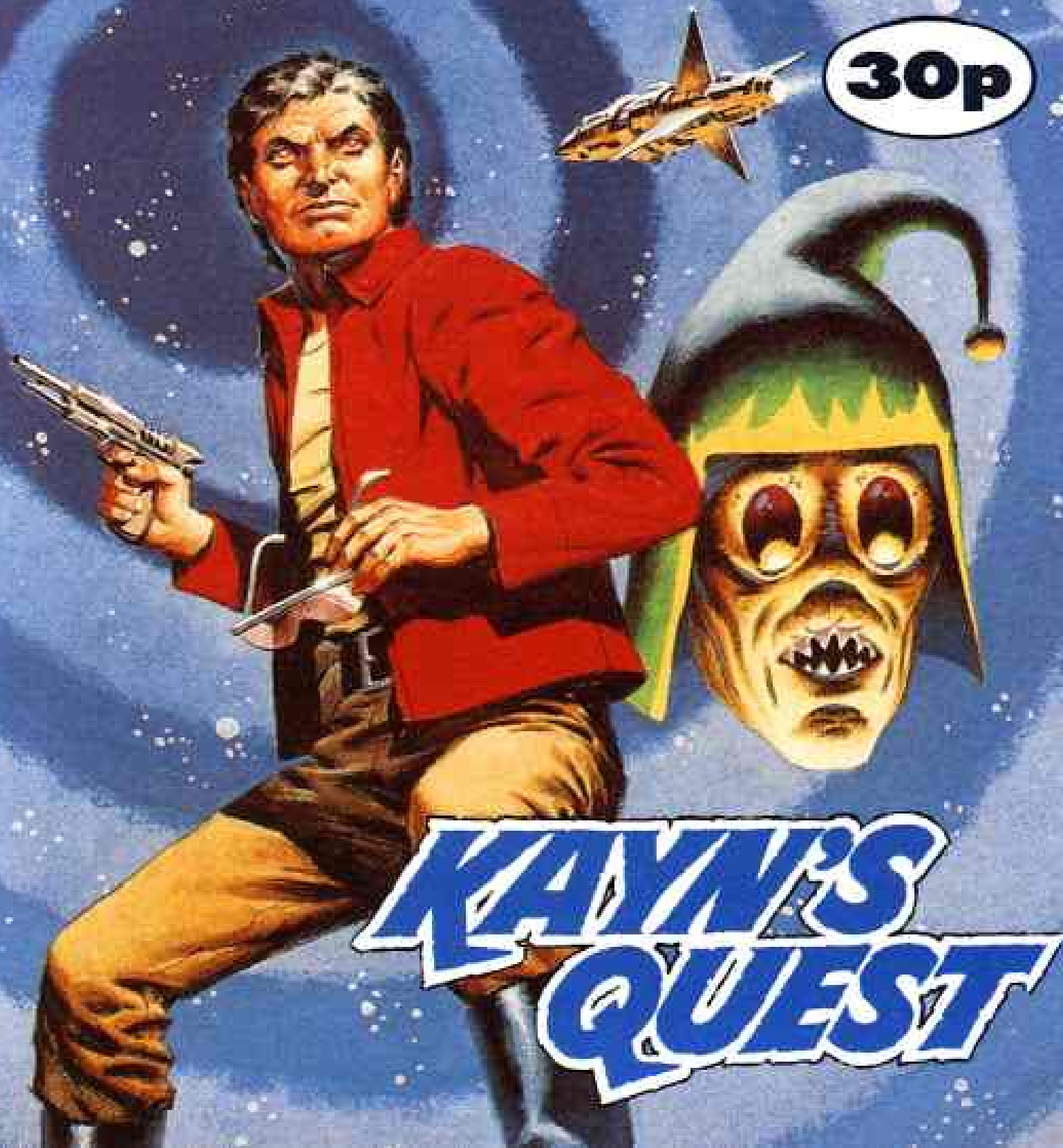


STARBLAZER

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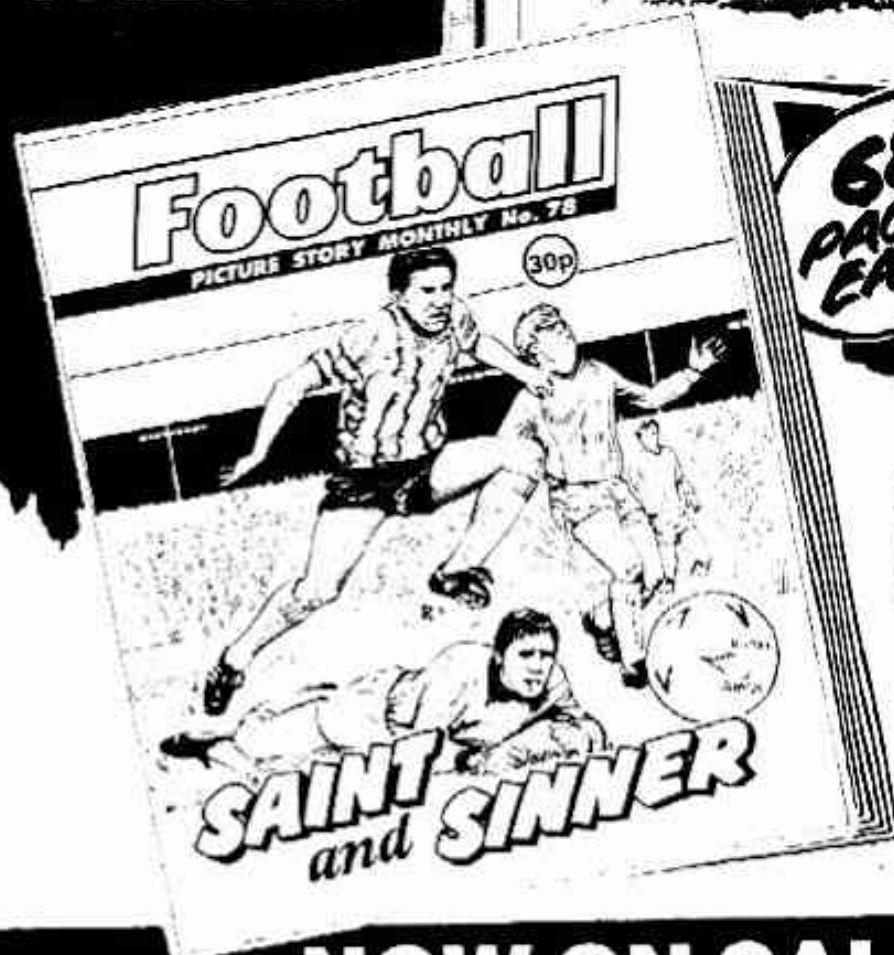
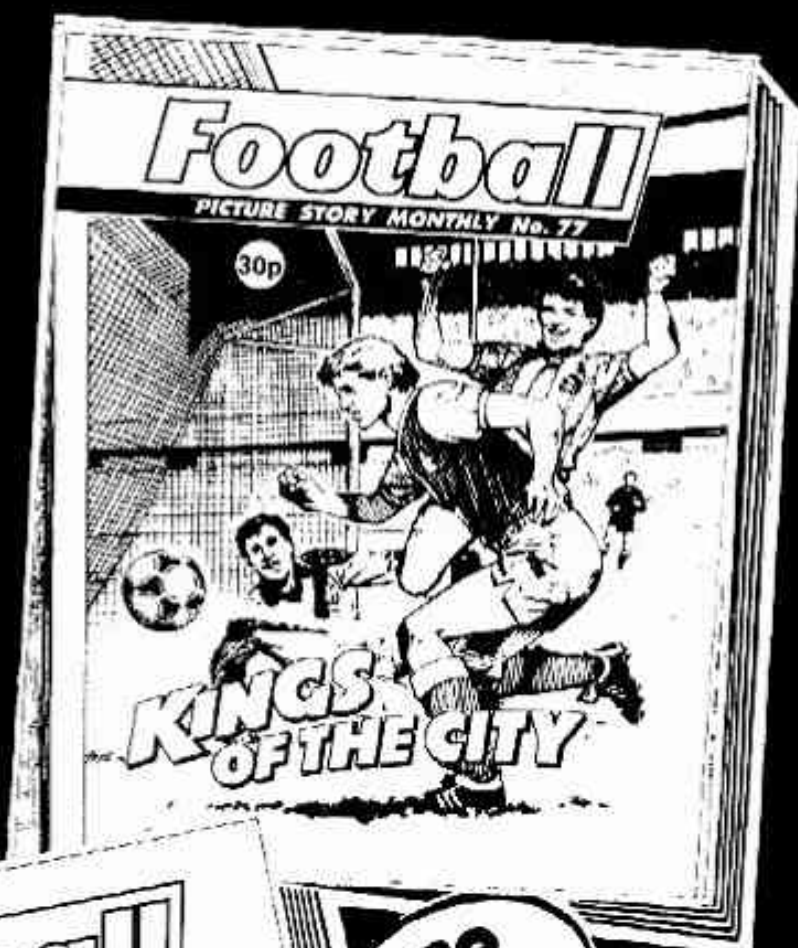
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30p



KANN'S QUEST

**IF YOU'RE
A
FOOTBALL
FAN, YOU
CAN'T
AFFORD
TO MISS
THESE!**



**68
PAGES
EACH**

**FOOTBALL
LIBRARIES
Nos. 77+78**

NOW ON SALE

30p

Kayn's Quest



WEST EARTH UNIVERSITY, NEW
MOSCOW, HALF PAST TWO IN
THE MORNING.

4
DESPITE THE HOUR, PROFESSOR LINDEN WAS ENGROSSED WITH HIS RESEARCH OF ANCIENT ALIEN CIVILISATIONS, DEEP INSIDE THE XENO-HISTORY DEPARTMENT.

HOW FASCINATING! THE CRYSTALLINE STRUCTURE BEARS AN UNCANNY RESEMBLANCE TO MICRO-CIRCUITRY!



BUT THE PROFESSOR WASN'T THE ONLY LATE WORKER ON THE PREMISES—

OKAY, PROF!
WHERE'S THE
STUFF FROM THE
CHASFAN DIG?

NO! I'M STILL WORKING ON
THAT! GET OUT — BEFORE I
CALL A GUARD!





THEIR SHIP BLASTED AWAY, LEAVING THE STRICKEN UNIVERSITY MORE LIKE A MORGUE.



ON GOOD DAYS I'M A PRIVATE INVESTIGATOR, CALLED MIKAL R. KAYN, ON BAD DAYS I WONDER HOW TO PAY MY RENT ... AND MY NAME'S STILL MIKAL R. KAYN.

OKAY, COMPUTER —
TWIST!

TEN OF SPADES!
THAT MAKES
TWENTY-FOUR,
KAYN — YOU'RE
BUST!



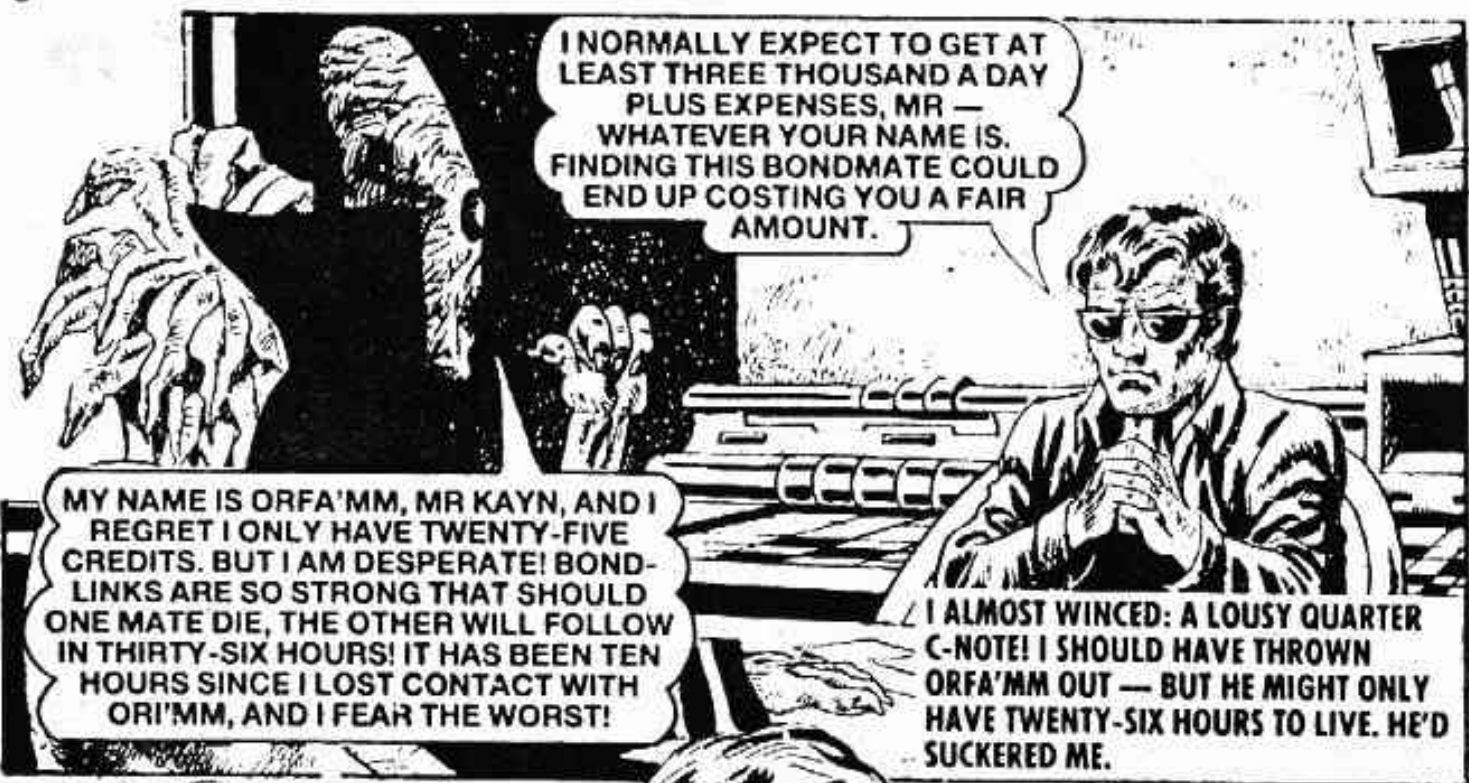
THAT'S THE
EIGHTEENTH HAND
YOU'VE WON! WHY,
HELLO — COME IN!

YOU ARE MIKAL KAYN, THE
PRIVATE INVESTIGATOR?

I RECOGNISED THE ALIEN AS A DYADASSI,
AND THEY ALWAYS — BUT ALWAYS —
TRAVEL IN PAIRS. AND I WAS CURIOUS ...
HE WAS ALONE.







I NORMALLY EXPECT TO GET AT LEAST THREE THOUSAND A DAY PLUS EXPENSES, MR — WHATEVER YOUR NAME IS. FINDING THIS BONDMATE COULD END UP COSTING YOU A FAIR AMOUNT.

MY NAME IS ORFA'MM, MR KAYN, AND I REGRET I ONLY HAVE TWENTY-FIVE CREDITS. BUT I AM DESPERATE! BOND-LINKS ARE SO STRONG THAT SHOULD ONE MATE DIE, THE OTHER WILL FOLLOW IN THIRTY-SIX HOURS! IT HAS BEEN TEN HOURS SINCE I LOST CONTACT WITH ORI'MM, AND I FEAR THE WORST!

I ALMOST WONCED: A LOUSY QUARTER C-NOTE! I SHOULD HAVE THROWN ORFA'MM OUT — BUT HE MIGHT ONLY HAVE TWENTY-SIX HOURS TO LIVE. HE'D SUCKERED ME.

I'D LIKE TO HELP, MR ORFA'MM, BUT TWENTY-FIVE CREDITS DOESN'T TICKLE MY FANCY.

EVEN IF I TOLD YOU THAT I KNOW ORI'MM IS SOMEHOW INVOLVED WITH A LIGNAZ GROSSE?

THAT TICKLED MY FANCY. THAT NAME DREW ME RIGHT IN. LIGNAZ GROSSE WAS THE SORT OF THING YOU'D NEVER FIND UNDER ANY SELF-RESPECTING STONE — AND I HAD MORE THAN ONE SCORE TO SETTLE WITH HIM.

OKAY, ORFA'MM —
I'LL ASK AROUND.
CALL BACK IN AN
HOUR!

THANK YOU, MR KAYN. I AM
ETERNALLY GRATEFUL TO
YOU.

AT THOSE RATES, I GUESS HE WAS, TOO.

GROSSE STAYED IN A SLEAZY
TOWN APARTMENT, SO I
STARTED BY MAKING MY WAY
THERE. HE'D CLAM UP TIGHTER
THAN A DROVIAN CRAB AT LOW
TIDE, BUT I WAS COUNTING ON
BLUFFING HIM OUT, MY
COMPUTER WASN'T SO
OPTIMISTIC.

I KNEW IT, KAYN — YOU'VE
FINALLY GONE SOFT.
GROSSE WON'T ADMIT
ANYTHING!

MAYBE! BUT I MIGHT
CON HIM INTO
BELIEVING ORFA'MM'S
BONDMATE KNOWS
MORE THAN HE DOES.


BUT WHEN I GOT TO
GROSSE'S SLEAZY
PAD, IT LOOKED LIKE HE
WAS BEING A MITE
CARELESS WITH HIS LOCKS.

ALREADY OPEN!



AT TIMES LIKE THIS, I'M
ALMOST GLAD I CAN ONLY
SEE IN INFRA-RED WITHOUT
MY SHADES.

INSIDE THE LIGHTS WERE OFF, AND I HAD NO
IDEA WHERE THE SWITCH WAS — BUT THAT
POSED NO PROBLEMS FOR ME.



NO AMATEUR DID THIS!
STABBED TO DEATH BY A
VIBRO-KNIFE! BUT THE
QUESTION IS — WHO IS HE?
AND WHAT'S HIS CORPSE
DOING IN GROSSE'S
APARTMENT.

TOO MUCH TO EXPECT
GROSSE KILLED HIM, I
SUPPOSE?



WHEN THE WORLD FINALLY CAME BACK, THERE WERE TWO UGLY FACES PEERING AT ME.

FEELING BETTER, KAYN?

MAYBE HE BETTER TAKE A TRIP DOWNTOWN, LIEUTENANT — HAVE HIS BUMPS READ?



NOTHING MAKES SENSE,
WATHAN. WARP OUT, KAYN,
YOU'RE MAKING THE PLACE
LOOK UNTIDY.



SUITS ME!

BACK AT THE OFFICE, I KEPT MYSELF BUSY WHILST
WAITING FOR ORFA'MM TO RETURN.



TWO QUESTIONS,
COMPUTER — WHO WAS
THE STIFF, AND WHO WAS
M'GAN'S HAPPY SHADOW?

THE DEAD MAN WAS TOMOZ MORDEN —
IDENTIFIED AS ONE OF THE GANG WHO
ROBBED THE WEST EARTH UNIVERSITY OF
THE CHASFAN RELICS A FEW HOURS AGO. HE
LIFTED HIS MASK DURING THE RAID, AND THE
SECURITY CAMERAS PICKED HIM OUT.

CHASFAN? AND WHAT
ABOUT THE COPPER?

SERGEANT ROX WATHAN, CITY HOMICIDE.
UNTIL TWO YEARS AGO HE WAS A
PATHFINDER IN THE DEEP-SPACE
EXPLORATION CORPS.



CHASFAN WAS THE DYADASSI HOME
PLANET, AND THE EXPLORATION CORPS
SPENT A LONG TIME ON CHASFAN.

AN HOUR LATER ORFA'MM WALKED INTO MY OFFICE — AND A LITTLE SURPRISE.

NICE TO SEE YOU, MR ORFA'MM. HERE'S YOUR TWENTY-FIVE CRED'S BACK — CLOSE THE DOOR ON YOUR WAY OUT!

WHAT? I DON'T UNDERSTAND, MR KAYN — IS THERE A PROBLEM?

I HAD A LITTLE STORY, SO I TOSSED IT IN ORFA'MM'S DIRECTION.

YOU FAILED TO MENTION THAT YOUR BONDMADE WAS INVOLVED WITH A GANG WHO STOLE CHASFAN RELICS FROM THE DYADASSI HOME PLANET. NOW THE ONLY MEMBER OF THAT GANG TO BE IDENTIFIED IS DEAD — MURDERED AND I THINK YOU'D BETTER START LEVELLING WITH ME, OR TAKE A WALK.

I THINK THE GANG WERE AFTER THE MOLFAAN. LEGEND HAS IT THAT A LOST CIVILISATION ON CHASFAN FILLED THE MOLFAAN WITH THEIR ENTIRE KNOWLEDGE, AND THAT A DYADASSI COULD TUNE HIMSELF TO THE DEVICE IN THE SAME WAY AS BOND MATING IS ACHIEVED. FEW BELIEVE THE LEGEND.

THAT'S LEVEL ENOUGH! I WISH YOU'D TOLD ME ALL THIS EARLIER, ORFA'MM — IT MIGHT HAVE HELPED. NOW — HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT A LITTLE SPACE TRIP?

YOU'VE LOST ME AGAIN, MR KAYN. TO WHERE?

TO CHASFAN. I'VE JUST HAD THIS URGE TO GO POKING AROUND THE RUINS.



I WAS PRETTY SURE THERE WAS AN
OVERACTIVE PAIR OF EARS
SOMEWHERE.



... POKING AROUND THE RUINS.

BLAST OFF WAS SUCCESSFUL. IT WAS
GETTING TO CHASFAN AND BACK SAFELY
THAT BUGGED ME MOST.



OKAY, COMPUTER. LAY
IN A COURSE FOR
CHASFAN, AND DON'T
SPARE THE LIGHT-
YEARS.

PLEASE, KAYN —
LAY OFF THE HUMOUR.

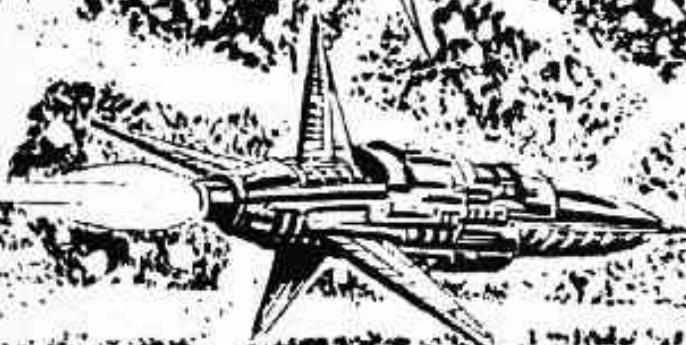
THE DYADASSI SEEMED RESTLESS.

RELAX, ORFA'MM — WE'RE
ONLY POPPING HOME,
AFTER ALL.

IT'S NOT THAT, MR KAYN.
BUT YOU SEE, WITH OUR
UNIQUE EMPATHIC
TRAITS ...



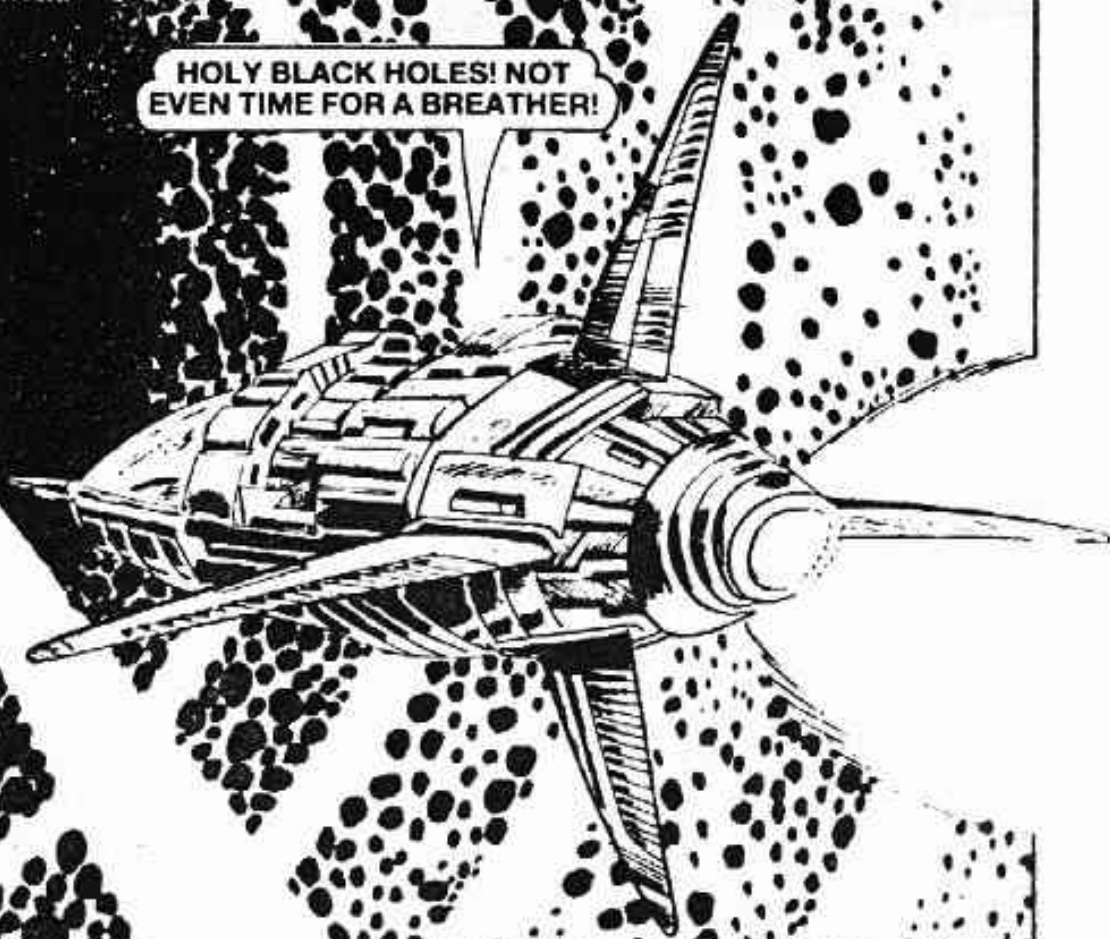
... DYADASSI HATE
TRAVELLING THROUGH
HYPERSPACE!

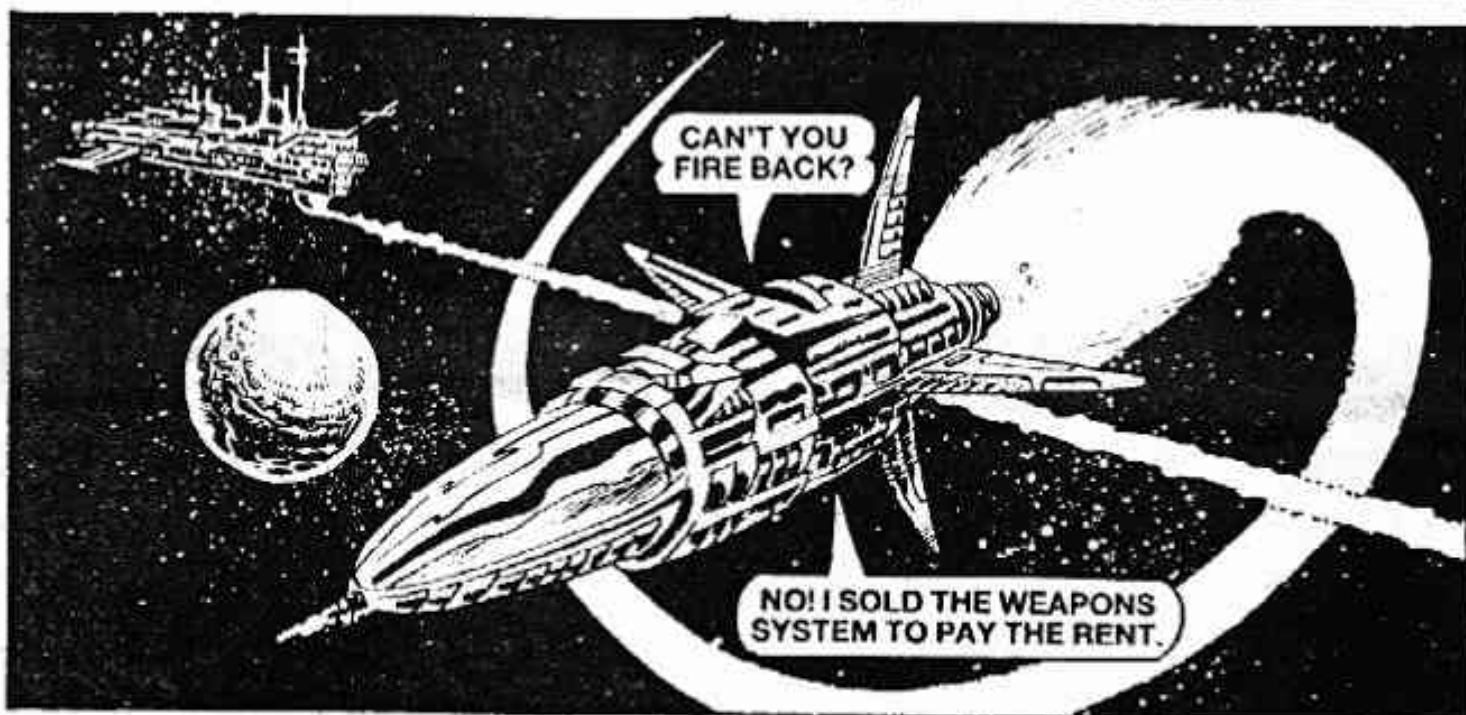


BUT IT WAS TOO LATE FOR PROTESTS. THE
COMPUTER AUTOMATICALLY CLICKED ON THE
HYPERDRIVE, AND WE WERE HURTLING
THROUGH THAT NEVER-NEVER LAND OUTSIDE
SPACE AND TIME.

WE POPPED BACK INTO NORMAL SPACE
A COUPLE OF LIGHT-HOURS FROM
CHASFAN, AND CAME UNDER ATTACK.

HOLY BLACK HOLES! NOT
EVEN TIME FOR A BREATHER!





AND AS I'D GUESSED, OUR WELCOMING COMMITTEE TURNED AND LEFT.

WHAT'S TO STOP HIM GETTING US ON THE WAY BACK?

I'VE A HUNCH WE'LL BE SAFE ENOUGH UNTIL WE GET BACK TO EARTH.

ONCE DOWN ON CHASFAN, I BEGAN TO SEE WHERE THE DYADASSI PRE-OCCUPATION WITH TWOS CAME FROM. THE WHOLE PLANET WAS IN LOVE WITH TWINS.

IT'S GOOD TO BE BACK, EVEN UNDER THESE CIRCUMSTANCES.

MAYBE YOU THINK SO. I'M BEGINNING TO FEEL CROSS-EYED.



I DON'T KNOW WHAT I WAS EXPECTING, BUT ALL I GOT WAS SAND IN MY FACE.

COUGH!
WHAT THE ... ?

TWO DYADASSI STOOD THERE,
WEARING CLOTHING IN A STYLE I
HADN'T SEEN OUTSIDE A MUSEUM.

OFF-WORLDER — WHAT
ARE YOU DOING HERE
ON THE SITE OF OUR
HOLY FOREBEARS?

AND WITH AN
UNBONDED ONE! FOR
SHAME, HALF-
CREATURE! YOU
SHOULD KNOW
BETTER!

THERE'S BEEN A
THEFT OF ANCIENT
CHASFAN RELICS
ON EARTH. I'M
HERE TO
INVESTIGATE.

THAT IS IMPOSSIBLE,
OFF-WORLDER! NO
RELICS HAVE EVER
LEFT CHASFAN! AND
NOR WILL THEY!

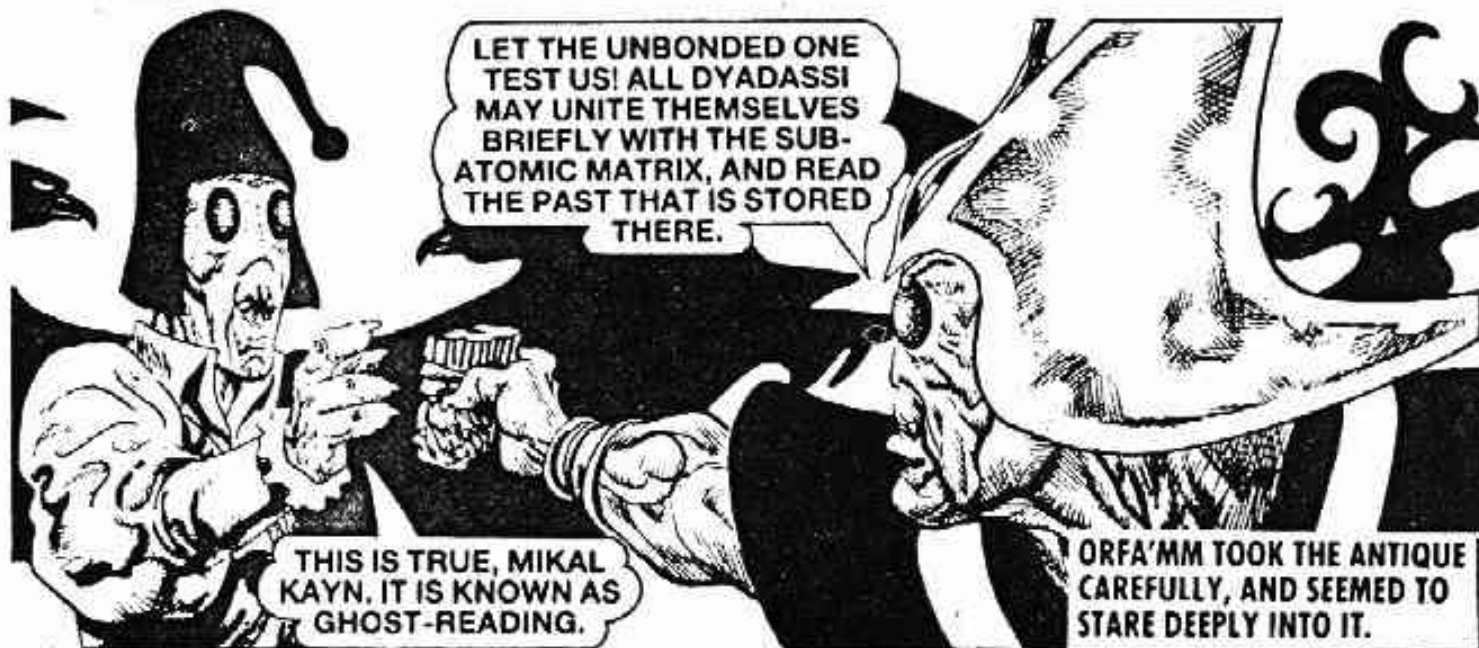
MAYBE IT WAS MY DAY FOR
SURPRISES — I'D CHECK MY
HOROSCOPE LATER — BUT
THAT REALLY THREW ME.



THINGS HAVE OBVIOUSLY
CHANGED SINCE I LEFT
CHASFAN. THERE HAVE
ALWAYS BEEN GROUPS
OPPOSED TO SHARING OUR
PAST WITH ANY OUTSIDE
THE DYADASSI BOND-
CADRE, BUT THESE SEEM
MORE EXTREME THAN
MOST.



BEHOLD THE
TABERNACLE OF
HERITAGE, HOME FOR
THE CHASFAN
ARTEFACTS YOU OFF-
WORLDERS WOULD
OTHERWISE PLUNDER.





ORFA'MM HANDED THE OBJECT BACK, LOOKING LIKE HE'D JUST BEEN RUN OVER BY A SPACE-FREIGHTER.

THERE CAN BE NO MISTAKE, MIKAL KAYN — THESE ARE THE REAL THING.

WELL THEN, WE'LL POP BACK TO EARTH AND TELL THEM NOT TO WORRY!

ON THE CONTRARY, OFF-WORLDER — WE CANNOT ALLOW YOU TO GO SPREADING THE TRUTH, ELSE YOUR PRYING ARCHAEOLOGISTS WOULD BE BACK. WE WILL GO TO ANY LENGTHS TO KEEP OUR TREASURES SECRET!

WE WERE LED OFF ACROSS THE DRY LANDSCAPE, TO HEAVEN KNOWS WHERE.

COMPUTER! I HOPE YOU'VE BEEN PAYING ATTENTION RECENTLY!

OH, I WONDERED WHEN YOU WERE GOING TO GET AROUND TO ME! YES — I'VE BEEN MONITORING THE INFRA-FREQUENCIES DYADASSI USE FOR SOME OF THE EMPATHY-LINKING.

THE COMPUTER OFTEN SPOKE TO ME IN A CONSPIRATORIAL WHISPER... THAT'LL TEACH ME TO BUY ONE SECOND-HAND FROM A DEFUNCT DRAMA SCHOOL.

AND?

I THINK I CAN GENERATE A BRIEF
INTERFERENCE PATTERN THAT
WILL MAKE THINGS INTERESTING.
YOUR FRIEND ORFA'MM WILL END
UP WITH A PLANET-SIZED
HEADACHE, THOUGH.

THEN DO IT! COME ON,
ORFA'MM — WHILE YOU
STILL CAN!

MIKAL KAYN —
WHAT ARE YOU...?

I DIDN'T WASTE TIME WITH A REPLY —
JUST SILENTLY PRAYED I COULD CARRY
THE TALL ALIEN ONCE THE COMPUTER'S
ATTACK STARTED.






WE FIRED TOGETHER, BUT I WAS THE ONLY ONE WHOSE HANDS WEREN'T SHAKING WITH MENTAL AGONY.

I DON'T KNOW HOW I'M GOING TO EXPLAIN THIS TO THE INTERPLANETARY COMMISSION!

THAT'S NEVER BOTHERED YOU BEFORE.


THE JOURNEY BACK TO EARTH WAS MADE WITHOUT FURTHER MISHAP. BUT SOMEHOW THAT JUST MADE ME MORE NERVOUS. I COULDN'T BELIEVE THAT WHOEVER HAD BEEN WATCHING ME WOULD LET ANOTHER CHANCE FOR TARGET PRACTICE GO SO EASILY.



BY THE TIME WE WERE BACK AT MY OFFICE, ORFA'MM WAS GETTING BETTER, BUT STILL GROGGY. INSIDE THERE WAS SOMEONE WHO MADE ME FEEL MUCH THE SAME.

WELL, WELL —
SERGEANT WATHAN!
HOMICIDE GIVING
LESSONS IN HOUSE-
BREAKING THESE
DAYS?


YOU'VE BEEN A BAD BOY,
KAYN — YOU SKIPPED THE
PLANET WHILST AN
INVESTIGATION WAS STILL
IN PROGRESS. M'GAN IS
NOT HAPPY.



I DOUBT M'GAN GIVES A JOT
WHERE I AM. BESIDES, MY FRIEND
HERE WANTED A QUICK TOUR OF
THE NEAREST PLANET.

ALL THE WAY TO CHASFAN AND
BACK FOR A TOUR? LOOKS TO
ME LIKE HE COULD DO WITH
ANOTHER LONG VOYAGE —
TAKE THE AIR, SOMEWHERE A
LOT HEALTHIER THAN AROUND
HERE.


I WONDERED HOW WATHAN KNEW
WHERE WE'D BEEN, BUT LET IT PASS.



SO WHAT'S THE NEWS ON THE
TOMMOZ MORDEN KILLING,
SERGEANT? BEATEN OUT ANY
CONFESSIONS YET?

WE FIGURE MORDEN GOT
KILLED BECAUSE HE WAS
SEEN. GROSSE IS IN IT OVER
HIS EAR-LOBES
SOMEWHERE, BUT THERE'S
NO WAY WE CAN PROVE A
THING.





YOU HEARD WHAT HE SAID?
ONE OF THE UNIVERSITY
RAIDERS WAS A DYADASSI! IT
MUST BE ORI'MM!

MAYBE! BUT I WANT TO
KNOW THE
CONNECTION BETWEEN
THE THEFT, MORDEN'S
DEATH, AND THOSE
DYADASSI ON
CHASFAN. THERE IS
ONE, I'M SURE.

IF STOLEN PROPERTY IS YOUR THING, OR IF
YOU'VE ANY QUESTIONS REGARDING SAME,
THERE'S ONLY ONE PLACE TO GO ...

... QUENNA'S SLEAZE EMPORIUM.

WARP OUT, KAYN!
WHATEVER YOU'VE GOT, I
DON'T WANT IT, OR IF YOU
WANT IT, I AIN'T GOT IT!

NOW IS THAT ANY WAY TO
TALK TO SOMEONE WHO
COULD JUST SAVE YOUR
SHRINK-FITTED SKIN?

WEST EARTH UNIVERSITY GOT
TURNED OVER LAST NIGHT,
QUENNA — SOME VALUABLE
ANTIQUES LIFTED. YOU
WOULDN'T KNOW ANYTHING
ABOUT THEM, I SUPPOSE?

NOT A THING... I'VE
GOT RECEIPTS FOR
EVERYTHING IN THIS
SHOP.

THAT'S OKAY, THEN.
BECAUSE THEY'RE
FAKE.

WHAT D'YOU
MEAN, FAKE?

JUST THAT. THE REAL
CHASFAN RELICS
NEVER LEFT THE
PLANET.

FOR AN INNOCENT MAN, QUENNA
COULD DO A PRETTY GOOD
IMPRESSION OF BLIND PANIC.

THAT LOUSY
CHISELLER! I THOUGHT
HE WAS TOO EAGER TO
SHIFT IT!



THAT'S ALL HE BROUGHT ME.
SEE FOR YOURSELF. IF THEY
ARE FAKES, I'LL ...

IT'S SIMPLE
ENOUGH TO CHECK.

LITTLE HAPPENED WHEN ORFA'MM
PICKED UP A RELIC.

I FEEL A SLIGHT THRILL IN
MY PLEASURE-CENTRES!
PROBABLY A BUILT-IN LOW-
CURRENT EXCITER
CIRCUIT, BUT NOTHING
LIKE I FELT ON CHASFAN.
THESE ARE DEFINITELY
FAKES, MIKAL KAYN.







THE SHOT WAS TOO FAST AND PANICKY,
AND ALL I MANAGED TO DO WAS MAKE
THE THING LOSE ITS TEMPER.



BUT MY LUCK HADN'T ALL RUN OUT.

I CANNOT ALLOW YOU TO
BE HARMED, MIKAL KAYN!





WITHIN MINUTES, THE PLACE WAS CRAWLING WITH M'GAN'S GOONS.



SOON, MCGANN — I PROMISE. WHERE'S WATHAN?

ANY DANGER OF YOU TELLING THE POLICE DEPARTMENT WHAT'S GOING ON, KAYN?



THE SERGEANT'S OUT INVESTIGATING THE UNIVERSITY THEFT — THINKS HE'S ON TO SOMETHING.



THANKS, LIEUTENANT — I'LL BE IN TOUCH.



I DIDN'T LIKE TO KEEP M'GAN IN THE DARK — LIKE I SAID, HE WAS STRAIGHT. SOMETIMES I THINK HE WAS TOO STRAIGHT.



ONCE AGAIN BACK AT MY OFFICE, I KILLED ORFA'MM AND MYSELF OUT WITH MORE WEAPONRY THAN I'D EVER USED IN MY LIFE.

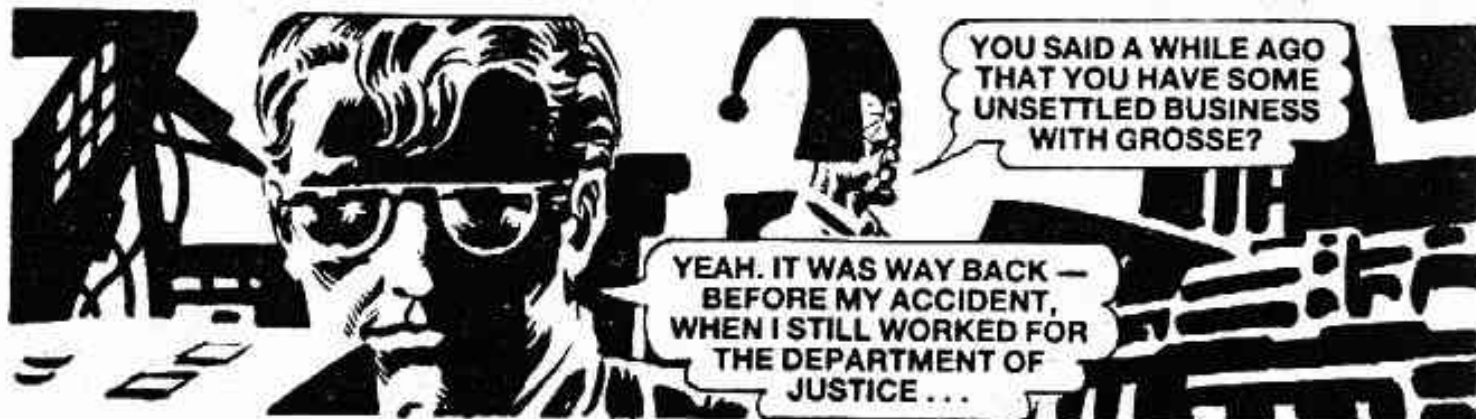
IS ALL THIS NECESSARY?

YOU BET YOUR CREDIT-RATING! GROSSE LIKES HIS PRIVACY!

WE LIFTED OFF, AND I HEADED THE SHIP TOWARDS ONE OF THE MOST INHOSPITABLE PARTS OF THE WORLD — ASIDE FROM GROSSE'S MANSION, THAT IS.

GROSSE LIKES TO MAKE HIMSELF A HARD MAN TO SEE?

AND HOW! YOU NEED AN APPOINTMENT TO MAKE AN APPOINTMENT — AND HIS LINE'S ALWAYS BUSY.



YOU SAID A WHILE AGO THAT YOU HAVE SOME UNSETTLED BUSINESS WITH GROSSE?

YEAH. IT WAS WAY BACK — BEFORE MY ACCIDENT, WHEN I STILL WORKED FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE ...

I'D BEEN AFTER GROSSE FOR TAX-EVASION, AND FINALLY COLLARED HIM ON ASHKELON, WHERE HE'D BOUGHT HIMSELF A RETREAT, DEEP INSIDE THE CRYSTAL FOREST ...


FACE TO FACE AT LAST, EH, KAYN? I MUST SAY, YOU'RE YOUNGER THAN I HAD IMAGINED.

GROSSE... IT'S TAX EVASION YOU'RE UP FOR, PUT THAT BLASTER AWAY.





IT WAS ONLY A
FEW MILLION!




THE LAW'S THE
LAW, GROSSE — IT
DOESN'T MAKE
EXCEPTIONS.

THEN I'M AFRAID I HAVE
NO CHOICE, KAYN.

HE CRACKED HIS WHIP, AND THE CRYSTAL TREE
NEXT TO ME SHATTERED —




AAARGHHHH!!!



SUCH A PITY!
SO YOUNG.

I LOST A LOT OF BLOOD, BUT
SURVIVED. GROSSE WAS
PREPARED TO KILL FOR A MINOR
CRIME — WHAT WOULD HE DO
FOR A MAJOR CRIME?




I OWE LIGNAZ
GROSSE PLENTY!





NO CHANCE, I'M AFRAID — IT'S TOO CLOSE ALREADY. THE BEST I CAN DO IS HOPE TO ESCAPE A DIRECT HIT.




NOT GOOD NEWS — EVEN IF WE SURVIVED THE EXPLOSION, BELOW US WAS A RADIOACTIVE WASTELAND LEFT OVER AFTER DECADES OF WEAPONS TESTING BY THE MILITARY.



QUICKLY, I FOUND A COUPLE OF RADIATION-PROOF SUITS AND TOSSED ONE TO ORFA'MM.


GET INTO THIS AND BUCKLE YOUR WEAPONS OVER THE TOP! IT'LL BE YOUR ONLY HOPE IF WE SURVIVE THE HIT!



THE MISSILE STRUCK OUR PORT SIDE, BLOWING OUT GREAT CHUNKS OF MY POOR OLD SHIP — AND FOR A MOMENT, ALL I COULD THINK WAS HOW I WOULD EVER AFFORD ANOTHER — I WASN'T INSURED.




AND THEN WE HIT THE
DESERT, THE CLOUDS OF
DUST LUCKILY PUTTING OUT
THE FIRES THAT HAD
STARTED. I STARTED TO
BELIEVE I MIGHT LIVE TO
SEE THE SUNSET AGAIN.




WELL, ANY LANDING YOU
CAN WALK AWAY FROM IS A
GOOD ONE, AS WE USED TO
SAY.

ALL VERY FINE FOR YOU,
YOU DIDN'T HAVE TO
EXPERIENCE BEING BLOWN
APART IN THE CRASH! I
SUPPOSE YOU THINK I'VE
NO FEELINGS?

A black and white comic book panel featuring a man in a futuristic, metallic helmet with a circular visor and goggles. He is wearing a striped sleeve and pointing his right index finger forward. In the background, another person is visible inside a similar helmet. The scene is set against a dark, rocky landscape.

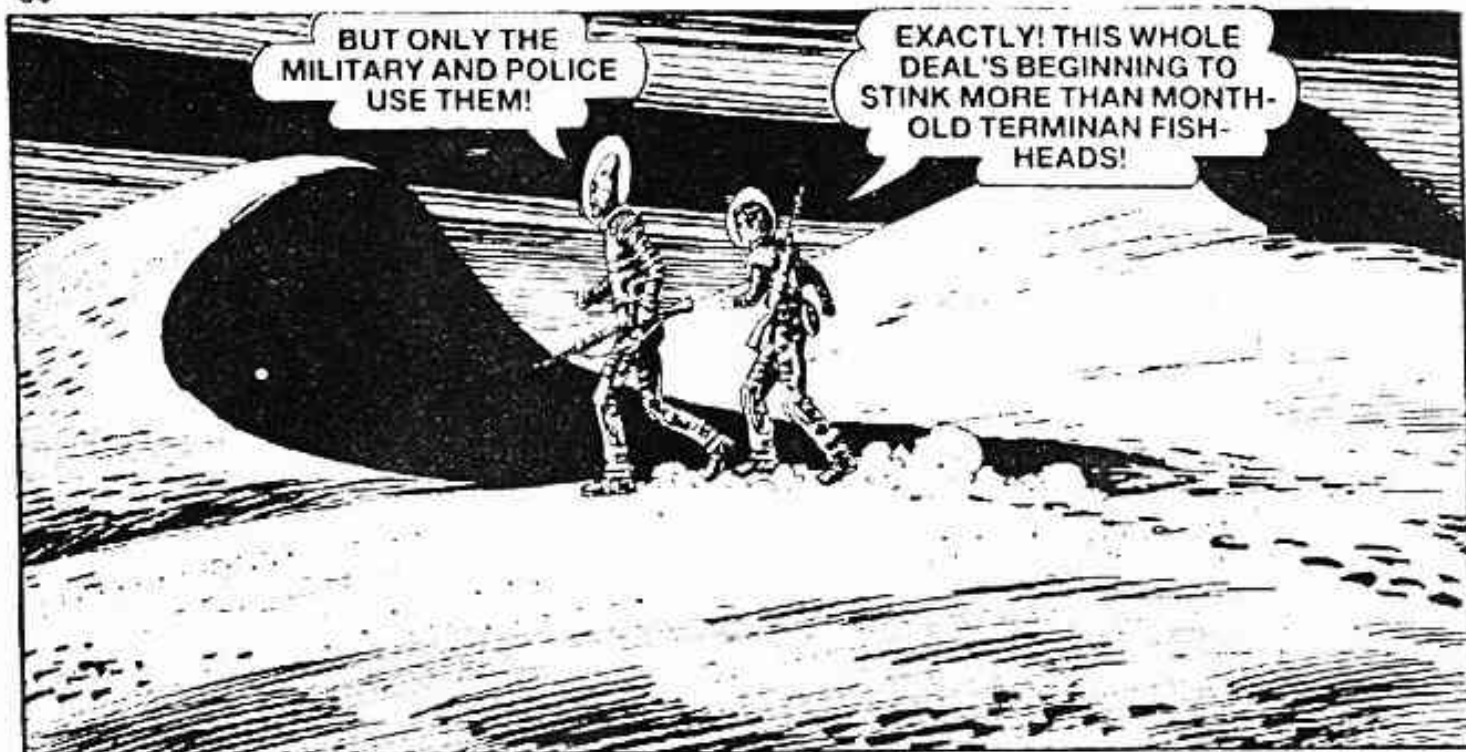
GROSSE'S FORTRESS IS AT
REF.020X27 — WHICH I MAKE
OUT IS THAT WAY, ORFA'MM.
BUT HOW FAR?

THAT WAS A GOOD
QUESTION. TROUBLE WAS, I
WAS ALL OUT OF GOOD
ANSWERS.

A black and white comic book panel showing a dark, rocky landscape. A large, dark, rocky structure dominates the foreground. In the distance, a small figure is visible on a path. The scene is set against a dark, rocky landscape.

I'M BEGINNING TO THINK
SOMEONE DOESN'T LIKE US
VERY MUCH.

YEAH — SOMEONE WITH
ACCESS TO MISSILES.





AND THEN THEY WERE ON US —
WHATEVER THEY WERE.





WHAT ARE THESE THINGS, MIKAL KAYN?

RELAX, PILGRIMS ...

I DON'T LIKE TO THINK ABOUT IT.



... WE'RE AS HUMAN AS YOU ARE. WELL — AS HUMAN AS ONE OF YOU ANYWAY. NOW D'YOU MIND TELLING ME WHAT YOU'RE DOING OUT IN THIS FORSAKEN PATCH OF THE WORLD?

UNDER THE DIRT, THE GUY LOOKED PRETTY NORMAL TO ME — AND I BEGAN TO WONDER HOW.

WE WERE LED BACK TO A WELL-HIDDEN CAVE, AND GOT SOME SORT OF EXPLANATION ON THE WAY.

THERE'S PLENTY OF RADIATION ABOUT, BUT NONE OF IT'S ACTUALLY HARMFUL. THE MILITARY WILL NEVER ADMIT IT'S PERFECTED SUCH "CLEAN" NUCLEAR WEAPONRY, SO ALL THE TALES OF DEADLY WASTELAND PROWLING BY HIDEOUS MUTIES SUIT THE BRASS-HATS JUST FINE. OF COURSE IT ALSO SUITS ALL THESE DESERTERS TOO.

AND LIGNAZ GROSSE.



SO YOU'RE AFTER GROSSE, EH? WELL, ME AND THE BOYS HAVE BEEN A THORN IN HIS SIDE FOR SOME TIME NOW BUT I DON'T SEE WHAT YOU TWO THINK YOU CAN DO ALONE.

LET'S JUST SAY I'M AN INCURABLE OPTIMIST.

OKAY, KAYN — FIRST WE'LL EAT, AND THEN I THINK YOU AND ME NEED TO TALK MORE.

SOUNDS GOOD TO ME — ESPECIALLY THE EATING PART OF IT.

THE FOLLOWING MORNING, THE COLONIST, ETHAN WAIN TOOK US TO SEE GROSSE'S MANSION — A LOT NEARER THAN I'D THOUGHT.

... AND LIKE I SAID, EXCEPT FOR THAT CRUISER YESTERDAY, AND ANOTHER ONE A FEW DAYS EARLIER, NOTHING'S GONE IN OR OUT FOR MONTHS.

WHAT I FIGURED. SO — ARE WE AGREED?





THE VAT-GROWN MUTIE DOGS KEPT COMING — BUT NONE GOT PAST OUR FIRE.

THIS IS TOO EASY!

ARE YOU KIDDING? THESE MUTTS ARE JUST TO SCARE OFF THE CURIOUS!

... BUT A FEW PLASTIQUE GRENADES MADE SHORT WORK OF THEM.

NOW WHAT?

HYPNOMATS — KEEP YOUR EYES AWAY FROM THEM! LUCKILY, THEY DON'T WORK IN THE INFRA-RED RANGE.

I KNEW THOSE CRAZILY-DANCING LIGHTS COULD HAVE YOU IN A TRANCE OR DROOLING FIT WITHIN SECONDS...

YOU WEREN'T KIDDING ABOUT GROSSE LIKING HIS PRIVACY.

THAT'S THE TROUBLE WITH THE RICH — AFTER A TIME, THEY GET CRANKY.



ONCE THE GUARDS
WERE OCCUPIED,
WE MADE OUR
WAY INTO THE
MANSION ITSELF.

YOU'RE GETTING VERY
BRUTAL SUDDENLY.

LAUGH IF YOU MUST,
MIKAL KAYN — BUT I
HAVE A SUDDEN SENSE
OF TERRIBLE
URGENCY. ORI'MM IS
CLOSE, AND IN
DANGER!



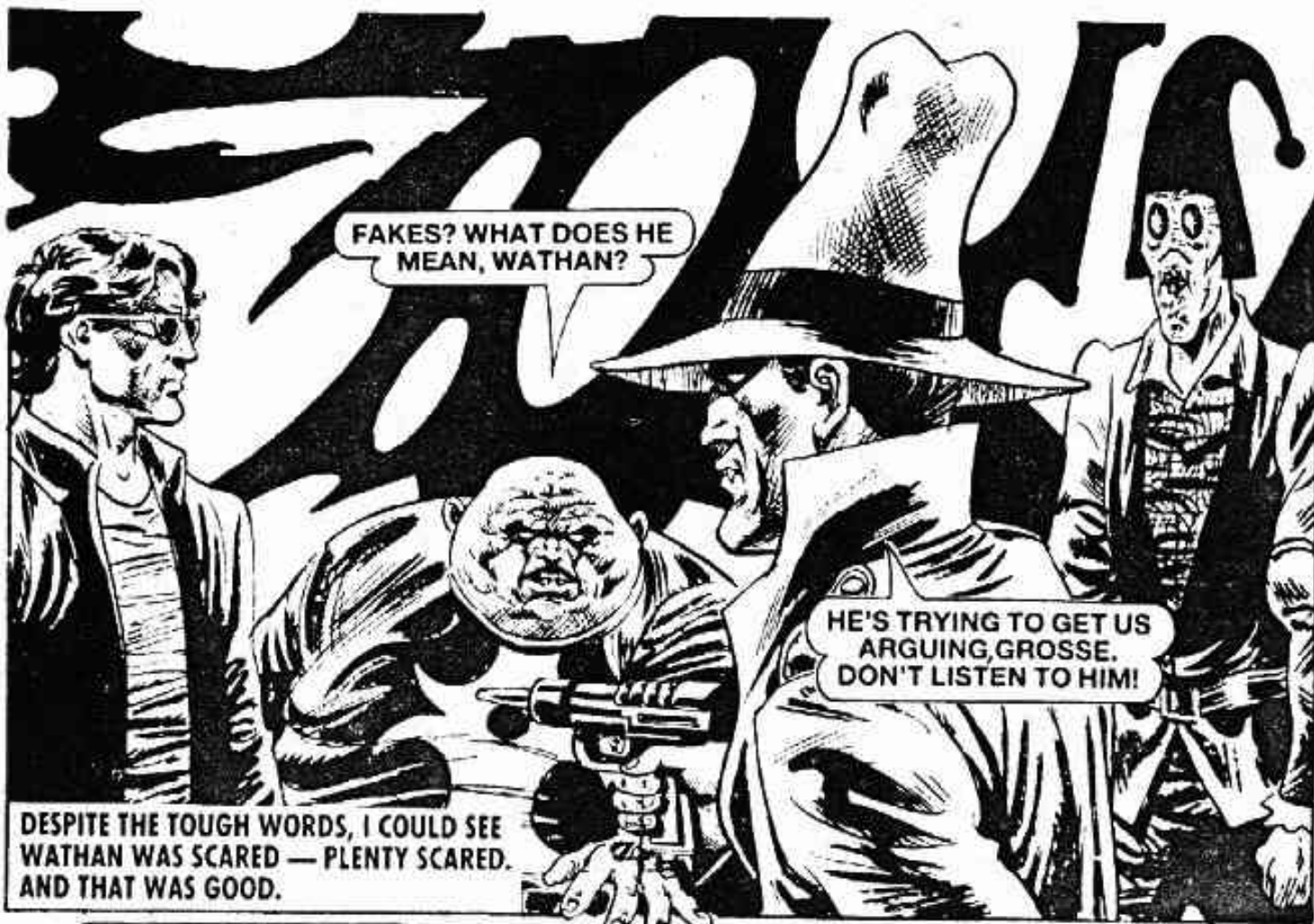
OKAY — YOU'RE
CALLING THE SHOTS
NOW! WHICH WAY?

STRAIGHT AHEAD!
THOSE DOORS IN
FRONT OF US.

BUT EVEN BEFORE WE REACHED WHATEVER
LAY BEYOND, I HEARD THE DISTINCTIVE
SOUND OF A POLICE-ISSUE PHASER.









BUT WHAT WATHAN DIDN'T KNOW AT THAT TIME WAS THAT THE RELICS WERE FAKES. THE DYADASSI ON CHASFAN HAD SUBSTITUTED THEM FOR THE REAL ONES BEFORE WATHAN LEFT THEIR PLANET. THAT WAY NO ONE WOULD EVER COME LOOKING FOR THE REAL RELICS AGAIN.

IT WASN'T UNTIL WATHAN WENT TO PICK UP THE STOLEN RELICS AT THE PRE-ARRANGED RENDEZVOUS WITH MORDEN AT YOUR APARTMENT, GROSSE, THAT HE FOUND OUT ...



WHAT D'YOU MEAN FAKE! YOU TRYING TO PULL SOMETHING MORDEN?

NOT ME — ORI'MM CHECKED THEM. HE SAYS THEY'RE FORGERIES. SOMEONE'S MADE A FOOL OF YOU, WATHAN. NOW I'M GONNA TELL GROSSE.









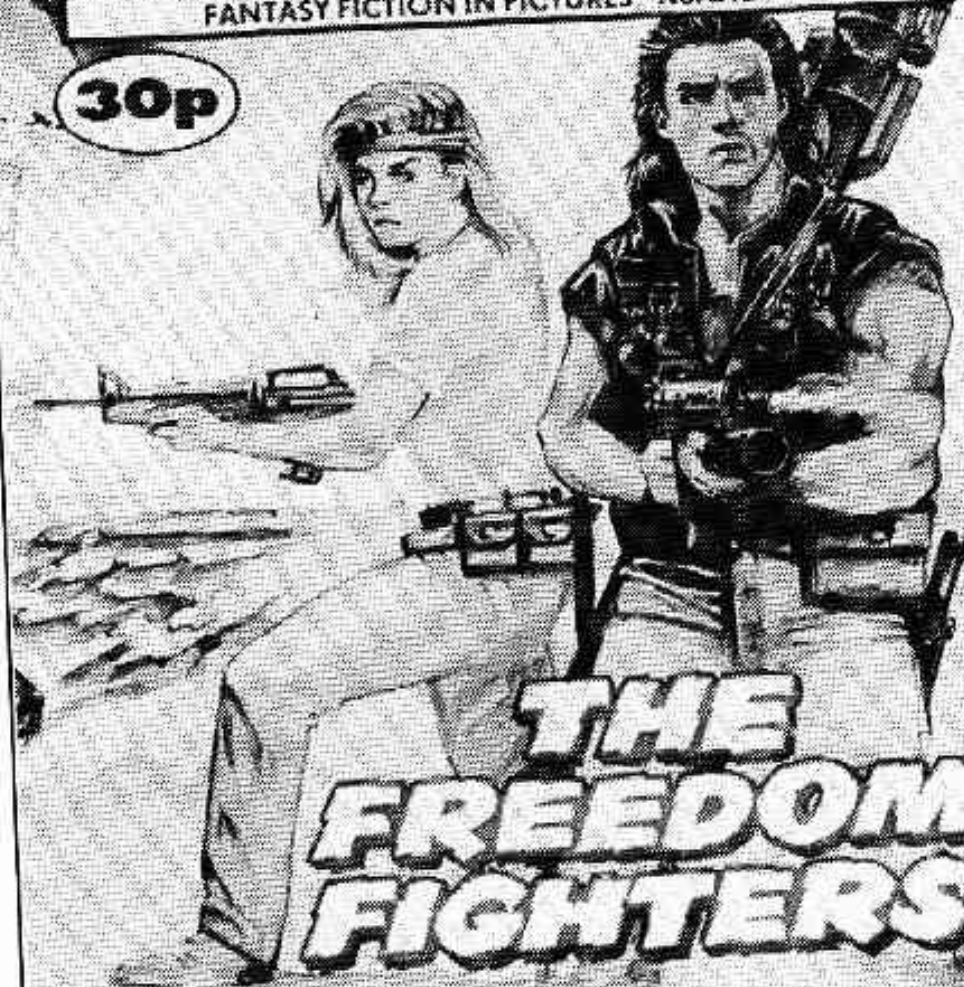
**DON'T
MISS**

**THIS MONTH'S OTHER
ACTION-PACKED
ADVENTURE**

STARBLAZER

FANTASY FICTION IN PICTURES No. 248

30p



**THE
FREEDOM
FIGHTERS**

NOW ON SALE

KAYN'S QUEST

Hi! I'm Kayn, Mikal R.
Private investigation is
my line and trouble is
my constant
companion. What
would you do if some
weirdo from a strange
planet asked you to
take on a job for the
price of a cup of
coffee? You're right —
show him the door!
But I didn't, and now
trouble doesn't start to
describe the spot I'm
in . . .

